

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 1, 2, 13-16, 18, 19-24, 28, and 30-31 will have been amended and are submitted for reconsideration by the Examiner. Claims 25-27 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections of all the claims pending in the present application. Such action is respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate and proper.

Initially, Applicants would like to express their appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided, for the acknowledgment of Applicant's claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 and for the confirmation of the receipt of the certified copies of the priority documents, in the Official Action.

Applicants further note with appreciation the Examiner's acknowledgment of Applicant's Information Disclosure Statement filed in the present application on December 17, 2003 by the return of the initialed and signed PTO-1449 Form, and for consideration of the documents cited in the Information Disclosure Statement.

Turning to the merits of the action, the Examiner has objected to the specification with respect to the title. By the present amendment, Applicants have amended the title of the application to be more descriptive. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner enter the amended title and withdraw the objection.

The Examiner has rejected claim 28 under U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

Applicants respectfully traverse the above rejection and submit that it is inappropriate. Rather, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 28 clearly and distinctly points out the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

In particular, Applicants note that claim 28 refers to two multifunction apparatuses. Claim 28 is directed to a multifunction apparatus that does not have a facsimile transmission function. Additionally, the controller of claim 28 is recited as being configured to send, to the server, based on the information regarding the menu, scanned image data together with predetermined information indicating “another multifunction apparatus”. It the “another” multifunction apparatus which has a facsimile transmission function, not the first recited multifunction apparatus which is defined by claim 28.

Moreover, this aspect of Applicants’ invention is set forth with additional clarity in the last paragraph of claim 28 which recites that the server transmits, to the “another” multifunction apparatus, the image data scanned by the multifunction apparatus based on the predetermined information. In other words, claim 28 refers to a multifunction apparatus which does not have a facsimile transmission function and “another” multifunction apparatus which has a facsimile transmission function. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the outstanding rejection of claim 28 as being indefinite under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Nevertheless, by the present amendment, Applicants have amended claim 28 to clarify the scope of the invention. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection.

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1, 13, 15-16, 18-19, 22-23, and 30-31 under U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by PARRY (US 2003/0030664). The Examiner has rejected claim 20 under U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by KITADA (US

2006/0190622). The Examiner has rejected claims 14, 21, 24, and 25 under U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over PARRY in view of KITADA. The Examiner has rejected claims 2-6, 17, 26-27, 28-29, and 32-35 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over PARRY in view of IDAHARA (US 2002/0032736). The Examiner has rejected claims 7-12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over PARRY in view of FETHEROLF (US 2003/0043404).

As noted above, Applicants have amended and resubmitted claims 1, 13-15, 18, 19-24, 28, and 30-31 for consideration and have canceled claims 25-27 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants respectfully traverse the above rejections based on the pending claims and will discuss the rejection with respect to the pending claims in the present application, as will be set forth hereinbelow. The claims have been amended merely to clarify the subject matter, but not to narrow the scope of the claims.

Applicants' claims 1-14 and 28-29 relate to a multifunction apparatus having at least a copying function. The multifunction apparatus is connected to a discrete server via a network, the discrete server storing information regarding a menu. The menu is displayable on the multifunction apparatus. The multifunction apparatus has a panel that displays the menu, the menu representing functions of the multifunction apparatus. The multifunction apparatus has a controller that communicates with the discrete server, receives the information regarding the menu from the discrete server, and displays, on the panel, the menu representing the functions of the multifunction apparatus, based on the information regarding the menu received from the discrete server (utilizing the terminology of claim 1 as a non-limiting example). Claims 15-24 recite related servers, claim 30 recites a related system, and claims 32-35 recite related methods.

Regarding the rejection of claims 1, 13, 15-16, 18-19, 22-23 and 30-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), PARRY relates to a workstation 520 connected to a printing device 50 (Fig. 1). The workstation 20 has a display monitor 30 that presents a display output of an application program as a "window" (see paragraph [0033]). A client application software of workstation 20 includes a graphical user interface software application used to locate and display Web pages, commonly called a Web browser 21 (see paragraph [0034]). On the other hand, the printing device 50 has a Web server 54. The Web server 54 generates at least one web page that provides an interface for printing device 50 (see paragraph [0042]). A Web browser 21 of the workstation 20 requests the Web server 54 of printing device 50 to send a displayable web page 56 to the Web browser 21, which includes customized or customizable printer control panels (see paragraph [0050]). Thus, in PARRY, the multifunction apparatus (printer 50) includes a copying function and an embedded server.

However, PARRY does not disclose a multifunction apparatus (with at least a copying function) that is connected to a discrete server that stores information regarding a menu, the menu being displayable on the multifunction apparatus. Rather, PARRY merely discloses the printing device 50 that is connected to the workstation 20. In the workstation 20, the Web browser 21 merely requests to the Web server 54 embedded in the printing device 50 to send a displayable web page 56 to the Web browser 21 (see paragraph [0050]). Thus, PARRY does not contain any disclosure regarding a discrete server that stores information regarding a menu, the menu being displayable on the multifunction apparatus that has at least a copying function.

PARRY also does not disclose a multifunction apparatus that has a panel that displays the menu, the menu representing functions of the multifunction apparatus (as defined). Rather, PARRY merely discloses a printing device 50 that does not have a panel that displays a menu,

the menu representing functions of the printing device 50 (Fig.1). Thus, PARRY does not contain any disclosure regarding the printing device 50 that has a panel that displays a menu, the menu representing functions of the printing device 50.

Further, PARRY does not disclose a multifunction apparatus that has a controller that communicates with the discrete server, receives the information regarding the menu from the discrete server, and displays, on the panel, the menu representing the functions of the multifunction apparatus, based on the information regarding the menu received from the discrete server. Rather, PARRY merely discloses a printing device 50 that has embedded therein the Web server 54 that sends a displayable web page 56 to the Web browser 21 of the workstation 20. Thus, PARRY does not contain any disclosure regarding a printing device 50 that has a controller that communicates with the discrete server, receives the information regarding the menu from the discrete server, and displays, on the panel, the menu representing the functions of the multifunction apparatus, based on the information regarding the menu received from the discrete server.

On the other hand, the pending claims recite a multifunction apparatus that is connected to a discrete server via a network, the discrete server storing information regarding a menu, the menu being displayed on the multifunction apparatus. The pending claims also recite a panel that displays the menu, the menu representing functions of the multifunction apparatus. The pending claims further recite a controller that communicates with the discrete server, receives the information regarding the menu from the server, and displays on the panel, the menu representing the functions of the multifunction apparatus, based on the information regarding the menu received from the discrete server.

Thus, the pending claims are clearly patentable over PARRY.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that numerous features recited in Applicant's pending claims are not anticipated or rendered obvious over PARRY cited by the Examiner.

Regarding the rejection of claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e), KITADA relates to a system in which a multifunction device 20 is connected to a scan server 40. In this system, a user of the multifunction device 20 can access a directory server 60 to search for information stored in the directory server 60 via the scan server 40 (see paragraph [0025]). The directory server 60 stores information such as the names, addresses, e-mail addresses, phone/fax numbers, other type of destination information (see paragraph [0024]). Thus, the user of the multifunction device 20 can scan a document at the multifunction device 20, and can request a search of the company's global directory stored at the directory server 60. The scan server 40 can pass the search request to the directory server 60, can receive the search results from the directory server 60 and can pass the search results to the multifunction apparatus 20. The multifunction apparatus 20 can temporally store and display the search results (see paragraph [0025]).

However, KITADA does not disclose a server that has a controller that sends the signal for obtaining information regarding menus to the plurality of the multifunction apparatuses, to obtain the information regarding the menus from each of the plurality of multifunction apparatuses, and to store the information regarding the menus in the memory of the server. Rather, in KITADA, a directory server 60 stores information such as the names, addresses, e-mail addresses, phone/fax numbers, other type of the destination information, and authorization of individuals (see paragraph [0024]). In other words, in KITADA, the directory server 60 merely stores destination information. Thus, KITADA does not contain any disclosure regarding storing the information regarding the menus.

On the other hand, claim 20 recites at least a server that sends the signal for obtaining information regarding menus to the plurality of the multifunction apparatuses, obtains the information regarding the menus from each of the plurality of the multifunction apparatuses, and stores the information regarding the menus in the memory of the server.

Thus, claim 20 is clearly distinguished over KITADA.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that numerous features recited in Applicant's claim 20 is not disclosed nor rendered obvious by KITADA cited by the Examiner.

Regarding the rejection of claims 14, 21, 24, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over PARRY in view of KITADA, PARRY does not disclose at least a multifunction apparatus that is connected to a discrete server that stores information regarding a menu, the menu being displayable on the multifunction apparatus. Rather, PARRY merely discloses the printing device 50 that is connected to the workstation 20. In the workstation 20, the Web browser 21 merely requests the Web server 54 of printing device 50 to send a displayable web page 56 to the Web browser 21 (see paragraph [0050]). Thus, PARRY does not contain any disclosure regarding a server that stores information regarding a menu, the menu being displayed on the multifunction apparatus.

PARRY also does not disclose at least a multifunction apparatus that has a panel that displays the menu, the menu representing "functions of the multifunction apparatus". Rather, PARRY merely discloses a printing device 50 that does not have a panel that displays a menu, the menu representing functions of the printing device 50 (Fig.1). Thus, PARRY does not contain any disclosure regarding the printing device 50 that has a panel that displays a menu, the menu representing functions of the printing device 50.

Further, PARRY does not disclose a multifunction apparatus that has a controller that communicates with a discrete server, receives the information regarding the menu from the discrete server, and displays on the panel, the menu representing the functions of the multifunction apparatus, based on the information regarding the menu received from the discrete server. Rather, PARRY merely discloses the printing device 50 that includes an “embedded” Web server 54 that send a displayable web page 56 to the Web browser 21 of the workstation 20. Thus, PARRY does not contain any disclosure regarding the printing device 50 that has a controller that communicates with the discrete server, receives information regarding the menu from the discrete server, and displays, on the panel, the menu representing the functions of the multifunction apparatus, based on the information regarding the menu received from the discrete server.

Thus, the pending claims are clearly distinguished over PARRY.

In setting forth the rejection, the Examiner relies on KITADA regarding which he admits is lacking in PARRY. However, KITADA fails to disclose that which is lacking in PARRY. KITADA does not disclose a multifunction apparatus that is connected to a discrete server that stores information regarding a menu, the menu being displayable on the multifunction apparatus. Rather, KITADA merely discloses a multifunction apparatus 20 that is connected to a scanner server 40. The scanner server 40 merely receives a scanned document and a selected address/number from the multifunction apparatus 20, and routes the scanned document to an appropriate server. Thus, KITADA does not contain any disclosure regarding a server that stores information regarding a menu, the menu being displayed on the multifunction apparatus.

KITADA also does not disclose a multifunction apparatus that has a controller that communicates with a discrete server, receives the information regarding the menu from the

discrete server, and displays, on the panel, the menu representing the functions of the multifunction apparatus, based on the information regarding the menu received from the discrete server. Rather, in KITADA, a user of the multifunction apparatus 20 accesses the directory server 60 via the scan server 40 to search for destination information stored in the directory server 60 (see paragraph [0025]), and the multifunction apparatus 20 transmits a scanned document to the scan server 40 (see paragraph [0026]). Thus, KITADA does not contain any disclosure regarding the printing device that has a controller that communicates with a discrete server, receives information regarding the menu from the discrete server, and displays on the panel the menu representing the functions of the multifunction apparatus, based on the information regarding the menu received from the discrete server.

Thus, the pending claims are clearly distinguished over KITADA.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the features recited in Applicant's pending claims are not disclosed or not rendered obvious over PARRY in view of KITADA cited by the Examiner.

In setting forth the rejection, the Examiner admits that PARRY does not teach user ID and asserts that KITADA teaches using ID or login information to retrieve a directory. However, the Examiner sets forth no motivation for the proposed combination. In particular, while KITADA et al. relates to various levels of authentication, PARRY does not. There is no reason for one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the PARRY device to utilize the various authentication level features disclosed by KITADA. Moreover, in claim 14, the key is recited as being configured to be utilized for obtaining information regarding the menu from the discrete server. As noted above, PARRY does not disclose discrete servers and KITADA does not

disclose obtaining menu information, as defined therein. Accordingly, for this additional reason, there is submitted to be no proper basis for the Examiner's proposed combination.

Regarding the Examiner's proposed motivation for combining the teachings of PARRY and KITADA with respect to claims 21, 24 and 25, Applicants respectfully submit that these asserted motivations merely set forth a feature of the secondary reference but do not provide a suggestion for one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the primary reference in view of the proposed teachings of the secondary reference. Accordingly, for these additional reasons, the Examiner's rejection of these claims is submitted to be inappropriate and improper.

Further, since neither of PARRY and KITADA discloses, teaches, or renders obvious, in the claimed combinations, at least 1) a multifunction apparatus that is connected to a discrete server that stores information regarding a menu, the menu being displayable on the multifunction apparatus, and 2) a multifunction apparatus that has a controller that communicates with the discrete server, receives the information regarding the menu from the discrete server, and displays, on the panel, the menu representing the functions of the multifunction apparatus, based on the information regarding the menu, the proposed combination can also not teach at least these features in the claimed combinations.

Regarding the rejection of claims 2-6, 17, 26-27, 28-29, and 32-35 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over PARRY in view of IDEHARA, PARRY does not disclose at least a multifunction apparatus that is connected to a discrete server that stores information regarding a menu, the menu being displayable on the multifunction apparatus. Rather, PARRY merely discloses the printing device 50 with an embedded server that is connected to the workstation 20. In the workstation 20, the Web browser 21 merely requests the Web server 54 of printing device 50 to send a displayable web page 56 to the Web browser 21 (see paragraph [0050]). Thus, PARRY

does not contain any disclosure regarding a discrete server that stores information regarding a menu, the menu being displayable on the multifunction apparatus.

In setting forth the rejection, the Examiner relies on IDEHARA regarding that which is lacking in PARRY. However, IDEHARA fails to disclose that which is lacking in PARRY. IDEHARA relates to communication equipment that selects a communication route among multiple communication routes that are available between the sending equipment and receiving equipment.

However, IDEHARA does not disclose at least 1) a multifunction apparatus that is connected to a discrete server that stores information regarding a menu, the menu being displayable on the multifunction apparatus, and 2) a multifunction apparatus that has a controller that communicates with the discrete server, receives the information regarding the menu from the discrete server, and displays, on the panel, the menu representing the functions of the multifunction apparatus, based on the information regarding the menu. Thus the proposed combination can also not teach at least these features, in the claimed combination. Rather, IDEHARA merely relates to a selection of a communication route among multiple communication routes that are available between the sending equipment and receiving equipment.

Further, IDEHARA does not disclose the information regarding the menu that is commonly utilized for the multifunction apparatus and for another multifunction apparatus, as recited in, e.g., claim 2. Rather, paragraph [0039] of IDEHARA merely provides explanations of the copy mode, the print mode, and the scan mode.

Additionally, IDEHARA does not disclose a controller configured to send, to the discrete server, scanned image data with predetermined information indicating another multifunction

apparatus which can transmit the image data to a recipient, when a predetermined menu indicating a facsimile transmission function is displayed on the panel of the multifunction apparatus, based on the information regarding the menu, the information regarding the menu including the predetermined menu indicating the facsimile transmission function, and when a facsimile transmission is selected on the predetermined menu, whereby the server transmits, to the another multifunction apparatus, the image data scanned by the multifunction apparatus, based on the predetermined information, as recited in claim 28. Rather, paragraph [0039] of IDEHARA merely provides explanations of the copy mode, the print mode, and the scan mode.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the features recited in Applicant's pending claims are not disclosed or not rendered obvious by PARRY in view of IDEHARA cited by the Examiner at least since IDEHARA cannot supply the shortcomings of PARRY.

Further, since none of PARRY and IDEHARA discloses, teaches, or renders obvious, in the claimed combinations, at least 1) a multifunction apparatus that is connected to a discrete server that stores information regarding a menu, the menu being displayable on the multifunction apparatus, and 2) a multifunction apparatus that has a controller that communicates with the discrete server, receives the information regarding the menu from the discrete server, and displays, on the panel, the menu representing the functions of the multifunction apparatus, based on the information regarding the menu, the proposed combination can also not teach at least these features in the claimed combination.

Regarding the rejection of claims 7-12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over PARRY in view of IDEHARA and FETHEROLF, the Examiner relies on FETHEROLF regarding that which is lacking in PARRY and IDEHARA. However, FETHEROLF fails to disclose that which is lacking in PARRY and IDEHARA. FETHEROLF relates to a cache

memory system in which a printer retrieves one or more print job elements that match one or more new print job elements from memory instead of having to retrieve them from a remote site. Paragraph [0036] of FETHEROLF merely provides an explanation of an input buffer 304 that is used to temporarily store data when the data is initially received by a printer.

However, FETHEROLF does not disclose at least 1) a multifunction apparatus that is connected to a discrete server that stores information regarding a menu, the menu being displayable on the multifunction apparatus, and 2) a multifunction apparatus that has a controller that communicates with the discrete server, receives the information regarding the menu from the discrete server, and displays, on the panel, the menu representing the functions of the multifunction apparatus, based on the information regarding the menu. Rather, FETHEROLF merely relates to a cache memory system.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the features recited in Applicant's pending claims are not disclosed and not rendered obvious by PARRY in view of IDEHARA and FETHEROLF cited by the Examiner.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of each of the outstanding rejections, and an indication of the allowability of all the claims pending in the present application, in due course.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believes that they have now done so. Applicants have amended the rejected claims for consideration by the Examiner, and have canceled the rejected claims without prejudice or disclaimer.

With respect to the pending claims, Applicants have pointed out the features thereof and have contrasted the features of the pending claims with the disclosures of the references. Applicants have pointed out the shortcoming of the cited references individually as well as combined by the Examiner, with respect to the recitations of the pending claims. Applicants have further pointed out the lack of proper motivation for the various combinations proposed by the Examiner.

In this regard, the Examiner has provided no proper motivation or suggestion to make the various claimed combinations, which must be found in the prior art and not in Applicants' disclosure. Even if the various references could be combined as proposed by the Examiner, the mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. In the present application, the relied upon references fail to suggest such a desirability.

Accordingly, Applicants have provided a clear evidentiary basis supporting the patentability of all claims in the present application and respectfully request an indication of the allowability of all the claims pending in the present application, in due course.

The amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to

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have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.


Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this Response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
Koichi NAGOSHI et al.



Bruce H. Bernstein
Reg. No. 29,027

December 20, 2006
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, VA 20191
(703) 716-1191



William Pieprz
Reg. No. 33,630